

March 13, 2020

**Arizona Department of Corrections, Reentry and Rehabilitation Announces New
Actions To Mitigate COVID-19 Risk**

The Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry announced today that visitation at all Arizona prison complexes will be suspended for 30 days, effective immediately, after which time the suspension will be re-evaluated. With additional cases of COVID-19 expected in Arizona, the Department is taking this action to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 within our prisons and its impact on staff and inmates, as well as to ensure the continued effective operation of the state correctional system in the service of public safety. This is a proactive step, and the Department currently does not have any confirmed cases within our community.

“My top priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of all of our employees, inmates and those that visit our complexes,” said Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry Director David Shinn. “Following similar steps taken at the federal level, this action aims to mitigate the risk COVID-19 poses for our facilities. We will continue to coordinate closely with Arizona’s public health officials as this situation evolves and communicate measures taken to protect the health of our community members.”

The suspension of visitation includes non-contact visits and applies to facilities operated by the Department as well as third-party operated facilities. Our policies for phone calls and written letters remain in effect, and inmates will have access to two 15-minute phone calls per week free of charge during this period. We will continue to post updates about the Department’s response to COVID-19 on our website. For more information and the latest updates on COVID-19, please visit the Arizona Department of Health Services at [AZHealth.gov/COVID19](https://www.azdhs.gov/COVID19).

In addition to this step, the Department continues to implement our existing Communicable Disease and Infection Control protocols. We are communicating with staff and inmates about how they can reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19, including washing hands, sanitizing surfaces, covering coughs and sneezes and encouraging employees to stay home if they are sick.

The Department appreciates everyone’s understanding and cooperation to protect the health and safety of our staff, the inmates in our care and the communities we serve.

###